

ELIPH HEWLITT, PIRATE

How Jarby's Encyclopedia Tamed a Pirate Crew and Gave a Boost to Female Suffrage for Women...

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER.

"If I wanted that book I'd buy it," said Miss Hinckley, setting her hard-looking mouth firmly, "and I'd like to see any man say I shouldn't. I know very well that Mrs. Beem is scared to death of her husband, and I'm not surprised that she let him dictate to her whether she should buy it or not, but I ain't that way. I wasn't made president of the Ladies' Female Suffrage for Women society for no such reason as that. It was because I know my rights and have got gumption enough to stick up for them, men or no men. But I don't want that book, and the reason is that I ain't got time to read it. My official duties takes all my time. "I should think they would," said Eliph Hewlitt, with a sympathetic little cough. "Getting the right to vote for ladies is a big job. It takes lots of work and lots of time, just like it did when A to Z indexed and classified. Price only \$5, \$1 down and \$1 a month until paid. "Mebby it does and mebbly it doesn't," said Miss Hinckley, "though I don't blame you for praisin' up what you've got to sell. But it hasn't got anything to do with getting votes for women, and I don't want it. "The little book agent looked Miss Hinckley calmly in the face through his spectacles. "You would be surprised, wouldn't you, if I wad to tell you that the day I left New York a committee of the Anti-Female Suffrage society came to me and begged me to give up selling this grand book? Yes'm, Eliph Hewlitt, they said, ain't you a man and a brother? Ain't it for the good of us men to stand together and keep the ladies in the kitchen, where they belong? Please sell this grand work in one volume, published by Jarby & Goss, don't, we beg of you, sell it to ladies! We ask it as a special favor, for with this superb volume in their hands they would have the same wisdom of praisin' up what is handy for instant reference, which would be not only our equals, which they are already, but our superiors. At that," said Eliph Hewlitt, "I snook my head. "Gents, I said, 'I must and will sell this book, nearly bound in cloth, with a frontispiece in three colors, to the ladies of this country. 'To sell it to the men I do not care, but in my humble way selling this book to the ladies is my life work. If, gents, I could sell this book to a man, as I have, you would want the ladies to vote and to bring their refining influences into use and to circulate from pole to pole, making elections as polite and elegant as a plink took from a man's mouth. "Them sentiments did you credit," said Miss Hinckley. "Yes'm," admitted Eliph Hewlitt, "but I only spoke what I believed. "Gents, I said, if you had been a pirate on the tossing seas, as I have, and if you had



"HE LOOKED KINDLY AT HER THROUGH HIS SPECTACLES"



you could expect of wives of pirates. So we kept the ladies locked down in the basement, and I did my best to keep the ship cleaned up, but it wasn't no use, for there was dirt everywhere, and the pirates always tracking in mud with their muddy boots. "What's that?" asked Miss Hinckley, sharply. "Where did they track that mud from?" Eliph Hewlitt hesitated for but a moment. Then he smiled pleasantly at Miss Hinckley. "From the dirt that the cross-trees grows in," he said. "I never knowed before that ships had soil aboard," said Miss Hinckley. "What do you suppose every ship has a yard for?" inquired Eliph Hewlitt. "Well, things got worse and worse. The masts was all cobwebs and some days all the crew laid around smoking, and everything was going to racky ruin as fast as it could, just as it is in another way in this country of ours today. There was big need of new laws on that ship and of some firm but kind hands to run things, and gradually we all come to see it, but we never once thought of the ladies in the basement as fit to do it. We voted one man into office and then voted him out again and another one in, but no good come of all our changes, until one day we run across a ship that was bound from New York to San Francisco, and we keel hauled alongside and took her. You had ought to hear our captain, who was a very profane man, swear when he found out what that ship was loaded with. Nothing but books!" "I suppose he only wanted gold," said Miss Hinckley. "Just so," said Eliph Hewlitt. "Our license only allowed us to take gold and jewels, but we had got so careless on board our ship by that time that we didn't abide by the law at all. The captain was going to throw that whole cargo of books overboard when I spoke up. "Captain," I said, "some books are worth money. If there is any first folios of Shakespeare in that shipload of books we can get good money for them." The captain swore. "Jimmy Crickets," he said, "there ain't no first editions in this lot. Near as I can make out this whole ship is loaded with what

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The Case of the Decoy Letter.

The central office man furtively watched the fellow for several minutes, to inspect and actions being of the kind to question the professional instincts of a subversive. Coleman first had seen him dodge quickly from the side door of a saloon in Chambers street, then had lost him around the nearest corner, only to sight him again in a nearby street, near the masonry of the great Brooklyn bridge. He did not appear quite a vagabond, this fellow, yet not far from it. His baggy trousers were frayed, his coat sandy, drawn about his ears, was of a vintage of long ago. Bent nearly double, he was searching for something in the gutter, and all the while too absorbed to notice the occasional passers-by. Yet three he glanced sharply toward the mail under the bridge, as if the insure that no eye was upon him from that direction. Coleman's curiosity presently got the better of him. He strode nearer the fellow, halting just behind him, and bluntly demanded: "What have you lost, my man?" "My man," peered up over his bowed shoulder, then indulged in a curious smirk through his unkempt beard. "Not my way, mister. Did you think I had?" he rejoined, with sly insolence. "I think you'd better give me a civil answer or you may be questioned in quarters less agreeable," frowned Coleman. "Oh, ho! A plain clothes chap, eh?" "That calls the turn." "For what, I've lost nothing." "For what I've found the most of mister. You don't see any bits like these in the gutter about here, do you?" And with a leer the fellow now displayed in the palm of his grimy hand numerous fragments of paper, more or less soiled, as if a written sheet had been torn into small pieces and thrown away. "Why are you picking up that trash?" demanded Coleman. "Not because I'm a scavenger, mister." "For what, then? See here, my man, you'd better—" "Not too noisy, Jimmie, if it's all the same to you," now came the interruption, with a subdued chuckle. "Drop around into Pine street about 3 o'clock, and I then may have about this trash in shape to answer you intelligently. So long, Jimmie! Take a turn the other way, what are you hunting for?" "Well, may I be everlastingly bamboozled!" growled Coleman, as red as a scabbler's crest. "It's Felix Boyd himself, or I'm a liar!" Mr. Felix Boyd already was slouching around the nearest corner, and Coleman swung sharp on his heel and took the opposite direction, but promptly at 3 o'clock that afternoon, stirred Boyd's own little curiosity, he entered Boyd's office in Pine street. He found Felix Boyd seated at his desk, stripped of his coat and vest, with his sleeves rolled to the elbows of his wiry, bare arms, and his disordered hair and furrowed brow indicating pro-

The Trail of "Big Finger"

ular thing with them. I glanced at my watch, Jimmie, and found it to be precisely 9 o'clock. Coleman laughed. "I'd wager that you were there at the same hour the next morning," said he. "You'd win," said Boyd tersely. "With what result?" "The two men met again at precisely the same time and for the same purpose. Yet not a word passed between them. But for the quick delivery of the letter, Jimmie, they met and passed like total strangers. "Humph! That's a bit odd, indeed." "So odd that I resolved to quietly learn what it meant," said Boyd. "The same four each morning the incident is repeated, Jimmie, with but one variation. A letter is delivered only about one day in four. Otherwise the two men pass, the one merely shakes his head a trifle, as if to intimate that there is nothing doing. "Have you seen them each day for three weeks?" "Barring only the Sabbath." "Do you know either of them?" "I have shadowed both and learned all that is possible of them without betraying my interest," replied Boyd. "The one who delivers the letters is a young man named Paul Cory. He lives with his mother in Brooklyn, and is said to be a lazy loafer, but with no other very evil habits." "That's bad enough." "Each letter that he delivers is received by mail the previous night, and I have discovered that he does not open them. By intercepting a carrier, whom I warned against betraying me, I examined one of the letters before he delivered it at Cory's house." "With what result?" "It was properly addressed to Cory. But I discovered that a pin hole had been made in the lower right-hand corner of the envelope." "A secret signal?" "No doubt. Probably notifying Cory that the letter must not be opened by him, but delivered as usual next morning. Otherwise the cover was ordinarily plain, bearing the New York postmark." "This looks like the work of crooks, Felix, for a fact," admitted Coleman. "What of the other man?" "His name is James Vaughn," replied Boyd. "He is a second-rate bartender and lodges in Third street. He has not been at work for several months, I am told, yet he appears to have ample money to meet his needs." "That, too, looks suspicious." "Decidedly so, Jimmie, hence I have been very circumspect in making my investigations. With the help of Perry, my office boy, I have shadowed both men until convinced that they have no meetings other than those mentioned. In fact, they appear in other respects to be entire strangers." "It certainly looks as if there was some big game on," growled Coleman perplexedly. "Does Cory or Vaughn meet any other persons worthy of suspicion?" "Not that I can discover." "What does Vaughn do with the letter he receives from Cory?" "I suspect that he mails a copy of it to some third party, possibly to the

chief director of their project, whatever it may be," replied Boyd. "By that precaution they may do without a rendezvous, which, in event of any danger, might expose the trail they obviously are aiming to cover." "But why should he mail a copy of the letter?" inquired Coleman. "Why not mail the letter itself?" "Probably another precaution, Jimmie, by which the sender of the letter delivered a copy of the letter to the handwriting." "Ah, I see." "Such extreme care would be taken for no ordinary purpose, and I am convinced that it points to a crime of unusual magnitude." "I believe you are right, Felix." "After receiving these letters," added Boyd, "Vaughn invariably goes into the saloon from which you saw me emerge. There he opens the letter and makes a copy of a sheet of paper with which he is provided. That having been carefully done, he destroys the original letter by igniting it at the cigar stand, pretending that he incidentally uses it to light his cigar." "Do the saloon people know him, or anything about him?" "I have not ventured any questions, Jimmie, lest my quarry might get wind of them and flee to cover. Being well versed in their trade, they cannot afford to lose the scent through any folly of my own. This morning, however, I contrived to outwit Mr. Vaughn." "How so, Felix?" "When he approached, as usual, to destroy the letter he had copied, one of which I have been decidedly eager to examine, he found the cigar-lighter extinguished. I had put it out while slipping a glass of beer. My scheme worked admirably. Instead of burning their trail in paper, partly owing to the curious character of the communication, I had only just finished it when you entered. I think I now have it in shape to read, barring a few fragments that I could not find. Draw nearer, Jimmie, and we'll look at it." The central office man complied, and for several minutes the two men grimly studied the odd communication. It read as follows, the occasional series of dots indicating the missing parts. "1. Rdg. received. Now O. K. Capital work. 2.—One N. Y. C. 5 to 500. Same as Rdg. 3.—Penn. Cen. 2 of 3 to 300 each. One IV-X-1888. One VI-X-1887. Both to James... under... the usual... refer to Co. 4.—These complete lot. When they are ready for... may begin to move the goods... her still fine. "Humph!" Coleman presently grunted. "I can't make much of that. It appears to refer to some kind of a deal in stocks, doesn't it?"

BY SCOTT CAMPBELL, Author of "Below the Dead-Line," "The Doctor's Secret," etc.

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chances. Yet when he and Jimmie Coleman entered the superb quarters of the great Ironclad Insurance company both were very carefully disguised. It was an expedient adopted only in event that the final recipient of the cryptic communication sent out from these offices, of whose safety precautions Boyd already had seen sufficient evidence, might then have a surveillance building under the watchful eye of some capable spy. Mr. Vanderliff, a venerable gentleman of 70, was in his private office when informed that two men, representatives of a large railroad company in the same line, desired an interview with him. This information, sent in through a clerk, promptly opened the way for Boyd and his companion. "Dear me, gentlemen, I'm very glad to see you," said Mr. Vanderliff, with an artless stare at them through his gold-bowed spectacles. "Pray be seated. From London, do I understand? Had you sent in your cards?" "Here is my card, Mr. Vanderliff," Boyd quietly interposed, having made sure that the doors were closed. "I think you will recall my name when you—Careful! Not too loud, my dear sir! Our mission is a delicate one, and the walls may have ears." "Good heavens!" gasped the startled old gentleman. "You're not really Felix Boyd?" "Very really, sir," said Boyd, laughing softly. "And my friend is Detective Coleman of the central office." "Goodness gracious! Dear me! Why are you here, Boyd, in this fashion?" "You know for what my contract with you calls," replied Boyd, somewhat pointedly. "I want a brief interview with you, Mr. Vanderliff, and to begin with, I will say that your obvious apprehensions possibly may be entirely groundless. Sit down at your desk, please, and give me your attention. Take it, and give me your attention. In case—Ah, well, we shall see! Now, Mr. Vanderliff, I will tell you why I am here." "If you please, Mr. Boyd," was the reply, with that grave composure which, under such circumstances, invariably denotes the gentleman. "I have reason to suspect, Mr. Vanderliff, that your company now stands in a very faulty to be seriously victimized by a very craftily planned robbery." "Is it possible?" "Probable, sir, would hit it more nearly." "You amaze me, Mr. Boyd; both amaze me and alarm me. Upon what are your suspicions founded?" "Before informing you, Mr. Vanderliff, I would prefer to verify them, said Boyd. "Can you tell me offhand of what the chief assets of your company consist?" "Why, certainly, I can, sir. Dear me, I am not the treasurer of the company. They consist largely of railroad stocks, Mr. Boyd, of the highest standard." "Namely?" "We have on deposit 500 shares of New York Central, 600 shares of Pennsylvania Central, 200 shares of Reading, 200 of Northern Pacific, 200 Canadian Pacific, 300 Boston & Albany, 1,200 Delaware, Lackawanna & West-

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